

Creating a Caring Community Highlight Video

Narrator: Welcome to this short presentation on creating a caring community. This presentation highlights the importance of a caring community for young children and provides some teaching practices that help create a sense of belonging for everyone in the classroom. The house framework helps us think about all the important elements needed to support children's preparation and readiness for school. The elements are the foundation, the pillars, and the roof. Creating a caring community is an essential part of the foundation. This presentation on how to create a caring community is one in a series of modules designed to help adults connect and build strong relationships with children and create an atmosphere of caring and belonging that permeates the classroom.

Teacher: Good morning, boys and girls.

Children: Good morning!

Teacher: Now let's try saying it in Arabic.

Teacher and children: Sabah el kheer.

Narrator: What does it mean to create a caring community? Think about words such as "respectful," "helpful," "compassionate," "kind," "thoughtful" and "understanding." A classroom environment that exudes a sense of caring is one where the children and the adults respect each other, think about each other, and help each other. Caring behaviors develop over time. They develop through many thoughtful interactions. Teachers model respect and caring. And they encourage children to care by helping them learn to share and cooperate and show empathy towards each other. Kindness can create a ripple effect in the classroom. As teachers demonstrate caring and kindness with children and families and other adults, the children feel more safe and secure.

Teacher and children: Thank you, Miss Eleanor.

Narrator: Children are better able to look beyond their immediate needs and think about the other children in the group. Why is it so important to create a caring community in the classroom? Research tells us that children who are taught caring behaviors when they are young continue to show these sorts of caring behaviors as they grow older. Positive social behaviors also predict children's performance in the academic and social areas, and children who show higher levels of caring behaviors tend to be more ready for school than those who do not. Researchers tell us that caring behaviors need to be voluntary to truly be caring acts. But teachers can help children learn behaviors that show kindness and caring and respect for others. Let's look at some of the ways that teachers help children learn to be more kind and respectful.

Teacher: We want to respect Amy's space. Let's slide over a little more. She's building something, and we don't want to keep knocking it.

Teacher: So what if I say, "Jennifer, would you like to come play with me?" How would that make you feel?

Girl: Happy.

Teacher: Happy! Can we all raise our hand for being happy? Happy! Yay!

Teacher [Speaking Spanish]: If you want another turn, you can write down your name and we can start the timer again. Thank you for helping him.

Narrator: Teachers are purposeful in designing their classrooms to make them welcoming to all children and families. They use the languages of the families, display photographs, and use materials that are familiar and comfortable. Teachers are aware and responsive to the individual needs of children to help children develop a sense of security. Teachers help children learn how their own actions affect others. And teachers acknowledge children's developing attempts at caring and kindness. Teachers let children know that their kind actions are valued.

Teacher: Where did you learn to write it in rainbow? Thanks for teaching Oriel about the rainbow. I know you like to do that each day.

Narrator: It takes time and planning to create a caring community. Teachers work at it day after day and delight as the children learn to care for each other. This short presentation highlighted the importance of creating a caring community in every classroom. Caring classroom communities make wonderful and joyful places for children to thrive and learn the many things they need to know to be ready for school. Thank you for listening. We hope you have new ideas to expand on the ways you already support the social and emotional well-being of the children and can continue to build an atmosphere of caring in your classroom. For more information and more ideas, see our longer module: Creating a Caring Community. And take a look at our Tips and Tools and Helpful Resources.

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